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12. — *Influence of the Ministry at Large in the City of Boston.*
By A SPECTATOR. Boston; James Munroe & Co.
12mo. pp. 72.

THIS pamphlet is a collection of papers, which were printed some time ago in the *Christian Register*. It is full of details of the deepest interest, set forth in a style of singular terseness and descriptive strength. The sketches, drawn from real life, and real life in its humblest form, rival in pathos and power the pictures of romance. The author of this little book has evidently been, not merely an eyewitness, but an actor in the scenes he describes. His manner of telling the touching stories he has collected, of want and woe, of vice reformed, and unbelief changed to faith, is too vivid and feeling to have been acquired by art and study. We have been constantly reminded, while reading these papers, of the celebrated "*Passages from the Diary of a Physician*," except that the latter are longer, more elaborate, and more finished. The former are the more touching and vivid. "The short and simple annals of the poor" are here forcibly related, and hard must be the heart which is not moved to pity, by the sad narration.

The author of these papers goes into a thorough discussion of the effects of the ministry at large, in all its bearings. It appears to us that his arguments are perfectly conclusive, as to the beneficial agency of such a ministry, and that they must awaken a powerful sympathy with the efforts of those whose talents are devoted to so noble a career of duty. We are happy to learn that New York has followed the example of Boston. A single society, influenced by the stirring eloquence of the Rev. Mr. Dewey, has raised an ample sum for the support of a minister at large; and we understand that one of the most distinguished young men in the profession is at present employed in that responsible office.

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13. — *An Address delivered before the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, at the Celebration of their Tenth Triennial Festival, October 6, 1836.* By JAMES LLOYD HOMER. Boston; Homer & Palmer. 8vo. pp. 40.

WITHOUT making any pretensions to fine writing, Mr. Homer has given us a very excellent discourse. His aim is to impart instruction and inspire just sentiments. He speaks as a practical man to practical men; as a patriot to his countrymen; and as a Bostonian, to the mechanics of the good town. In the

first part of his discourse, he points out the defective organization and imperfect action of the Society whom he addresses. This duty he performs with freedom, but in no harsh spirit. To illustrate his views, he introduces, with great propriety, descriptions of similar associations in other cities. In this part of his discourse, he states a variety of interesting facts as to the condition, intelligence, and opportunities of acquiring knowledge, enjoyed by the mechanics in Philadelphia, New York, and elsewhere. Mr. Homer then considers the subject of combinations and *strikes* among journeymen, and points out their true character and disastrous consequences. His remarks upon this topic have an especial value, coming as they do from a man who has a full and practical acquaintance with the course of affairs among the mechanics.

The whole discourse is animated with an excellent moral feeling. Mr. Homer inculcates habits of order, sobriety, and self-respect, among mechanics, in a most emphatic manner. The address has much in it to interest a wider circle of readers, than that for whose particular instruction it was prepared.

14. — *De la Réforme des Prisons, ou De la Théorie de l'Emprisonnement, de ses Principes, de ses Moyens, et de ses Conditions pratiques.* Par M. CHARLES LUCAS, Inspecteur-général des Prisons du Royaume, Membre de l'Institut, &c. &c. Tome premier. Paris. 1836. 8vo. pp. 385.

WE know it is very wrong to indulge ourselves in prejudices of any sort, whether in favor of theories or against them, in favor of practical men or of speculative writers. Both are important and useful in their place. But we confess we find it difficult to conquer a certain feeling of disgust and repugnance, when we see a plain practical subject overlaid and smothered under a mass of refined distinctions, formal divisions, technical phraseology, and scientific parade. There are some authors who seem to be aware that the value of their works depends on the number and power of their original ideas, or new combinations of facts and opinions, while there are others who appear to think nothing can have intellectual weight, unless it has the same quality physically, and that the number of reams of paper over which they can spread their elaborated ideas is quite as important as the number of ideas themselves. M. Charles Lucas, unfortunately for us, belongs to the latter class; and we have been